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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/761,693	01/18/2001	Masaru Tsukiji	DP-706 US	4695

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EXAMINER

ABRAHAM, FETSUM

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2826

DATE MAILED: 05/08/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/761,693

Applicant(s)

TSUKIJI, MASARU

Examiner

Fetsum Abraham

Art Unit

2826

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 March 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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Claims rejection

the allowable claims in the last actions have been withdrawn in light of the newly discovered document.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang et al (5,190,887)

The patent discloses a non-volatile memory structure in figure 12 having a cell with floating gate (62), the gate's region of overlap with drain (71) being larger than its region of overlap with the source (101 but omits to identify the structure as a NOR type memory device. However, logical circuits are inherent to the making of memory devices that it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to expect such gates as parts of the overall circuit of the memory structure in the patent.

As for claim, "dimensions" are notoriously known to be variable in the art solely depending on device size, convenience of fabrication steps and time and are considered to be design choices unless proven critical. In this case, the specification contains no disclosure of either the critical nature of the claimed arrangement or any unexpected results arising therefrom. Where patentability is said to be based upon particular chosen dimensions or upon another variable recited in a claim, the applicant must show that the chosen dimensions are critical. In re Woodruff, 919 F.2d 1575, 1578, 16 USPQ2d 1934, 1936 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

As for claim 3, the patent discloses the advantages of graded sources in memory cells. In column 8, 44-60, it clearly underlines that graded source regions proximate to the substrate results in the possibility of using higher voltages to program the memory and also provides higher junction breakdown voltages.

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As for claims 4-9 figure 14 shows the claimed structure. The structure is provided will physically contacted or unified first and second source regions (126,127) and LDD (123) that partially overlap with the floating gate (62). As for claims 6,7, LDDs are always less doped than the active regions in all memory cells.

As for claim 10, an array of memory cells make up a complete memory device. Common source/drain structures are common in memory arrays and the claimed structure is shown in figures 13 and 14. As for the concentration of source being lowest than the drains, the patent as discussed above has graded sources that maximize junction breakdown voltages. Such structures have fewer average impurity concentrations than single doped drains.

As for claims 11,12, each memory structure is made to be isolated from adjacent ones. This heavily minimizes cross talk effects and the method is standard to all memory cells in the art. Beyond that, there is always one floating gate and one drain per cell in any memory array.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Fetsum Abraham at telephone number (703) 305,3793, or by E-mail at fetsum.abraham@uspto.gov.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the **SPE of AU:2826** at (703)308-6601, or the **Group receptionist** at (703) 308-0956.

Fetsum Abraham/4/31/03

